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The Past and the Present Put Together in Graham Swift's Poems *The Bookmark* and *We Both Know*

Abstract: In his poem *The Bookmark*, Swift suggests that imagination is a way to take a distance from oneself. "Memory and longing amounting to the same," Swift claims in his poem *We Both Know* (240). In both poems, the poetic persona needs to put together different parts of their personality to feel complete. This reminds us of the individuation process described by Carl Jung. The title *We Both Know* suggests a dialogue with the poetic persona's own self. By unifying past and present incidents and aspects of personality, the poetic persona comes to a better understanding of himself. Swift's poems remind of a therapeutic process.

Keywords: Swift, imagination, memory, personality, therapy

Introduction

Graham Swift is still writing novels. So far, there are few studies that analyze them: *Understanding Graham Swift* by David Malcolm (2003), *An Aesthetics of Vulnerability: The Sentimentum and the Novels of Graham Swift*, a published Ph.D. thesis by Jakob Winnberg (2003), *Graham Swift* by Daniel Lea (2005), *Trauma and Ethics in the Novels of Graham Swift* by Stef Craps (2005), and *Graham Swift* by Peter Widdowson (2006). In 1991, Catherine Bernard wrote a study in French, called *Graham Swift: La parole chronique. Nouveaux échos de la fiction britannique*. What is common to all these studies is that they place him as a writer that stands apart from those of his generation. In her article "Tremulations on the Ether: The Sublime and Beauty in Graham Swift's Humanist Art" (2014), Nathalie Massoulier speaks about a particularity of Swift. She takes it over from Winnberg's observations regarding the importance of emotion in Swift's work. Her article focuses on the ideas of sublime and beauty in his works, claiming that these belong to the depiction of ordinary life. Pamela Cooper has a study dedicated to the analysis of Swift's novel *Last Orders: Graham Swift's 'Last Orders': A Reader's Guide* (2002). None of these studies focuses, though, on the lyricism of Swift's fictional works. Or not enough, I think.

David Malcolm briefly mentions that there are similarities between Swift's work and that of other writers, including Virginia Woolf, in particular (10). Indeed, Sabina Draga (242) claims that the one-day duration of some of Swift's novels is common to the Modernist novels. Marcus claims in his article that the brief duration of incidents in Modernist novels shows a "preoccupation with the relationship between narrative and mental processes" (88). It leads to a subjective time which relies on mental processes. It is accompanied by the use of flashbacks, used in order to tell the story without removing the action from the allotted day.

It has been said about Graham Swift that he rewrites the Modernist stream-of-consciousness novel, as practiced by Virginia Woolf and James Joyce (Draga 242). According to Catherine Pessô-Miquel, Swift's novels include "Not narration therefore, but a fictitious flow of thoughts sometimes close to the modernist 'stream of consciousness'" (135). Malcolm mentions aspects of "fugitive lyricism" (189) in Swift's novels, claiming that Swift's language is "full of subtle linguistic effects" (189). Stef Craps states that Swift's language is "characterized by its attempts to improvise a fugitive lyricism out of the patterns of 'ordinary' speech" (177).

In this paper I have chosen to focus on two of Graham Swift's poems, *The Bookmark* and *We Both Know* as they are concerned with uniting different pieces from the past with their influence on the present and with introspection. *The Bookmark* is concerned with using imagination as a way to take a distance from oneself. The poetic persona opens a book and notices an old bus ticket; he starts wondering about "The story it seems to want to tell" (Swift 256). He wonders about the person who put the ticket there and at the end of the poem we read "You know, of course, it must have been you" (257). Here, Swift suggests the passage of time and the memories of one's past personality. Sometimes, "those images of what might have been/ Can't be so different now/ From images of things that really were, / Memory and longing amounting to the same," as Swift claims in his poem *We Both Know* (240). The poetic persona wishes to feel complete, which can only be achieved by examining the past and integrating past incidents and wishes into the present. In the first poem, the past and the present selves should unite and in the second poem, the person he is and the person he would like to be should become one. This process reminds of Carl Gustav Jung's theory of the individuation process. The title *We Both Know* suggests a dialogue with the poetic persona's own self. Swift explores the general theme of the workings of memory and the characters' inner world in his novels and poems, which are strongly connected in terms of themes and motifs. Swift's novels include reflecting on the past, present, and future, as well as on certain moments in one's life. *Making an Elephant: Writing from Within*, where Swift comments on his works, allows us to understand his perspective on his writings; it also makes readers aware of the fact that he wrote poems in-between writing his novels.

We notice similarities between Swift and the Romantic poets. A comparison between the Romantic poets and Swift's novels can rely on common themes, all present in both his poems and his novels, such as: isolation of the hero, travelling, moments of vision, nature, personal and public history, self-expression, and the use of imagination. The poetic monologues found in Swift's poems discussed in this paper are the result of the hero's isolation. Isolation, in Romantic poetry, prompts the need for confession. The first-person speaker in Swift's poems, which favors Romantic self-expression, is also borrowed from Romantic poetry. What is more, Swift believes that "fiction—storytelling—is a magical thing" (11). He makes us recall the idea of "being under a story's 'spell'" (12), claiming that "the power of a good story is a primitive, irreducible mystery that answers to some need deep in human nature" (12). For Swift, stories can express a hidden truth, a revelation:

The real magic (if that expression is legitimate) of fiction goes much deeper than a few sprinklings of hocus-pocus, but we know when it's there and we feel its tingle in the spine. There can even be something magical about the perfectly judged and timed revelation on the page of an unanswerable truth we already inwardly acknowledge. In good fiction, without any trickery, truth and magic aren't incompatible at all. (13)

According to Swift, therefore, stories draw our attention to moments of vision, which remind of the Romantics. The characters, and poetic personas, use imagination in a way similar to that of Romantic poetry, in the way they reshape reality. Indeed, the everyday life is presented poetically in Swift's poems: "So this is their life, what they do every day,/ [...] No, no, look again. It's not what it seems" (*Rush Hour*). Apparently common incidents are presented in a different light, due to this special use of language and movement through time.

The leap in time is quite clear in the two poems under analysis. In *The Bookmark*, from the present, the narrator returns to the past, to the moment when he used it and to the moment memory and imagination become the same. The special effects in this poem come from using a structure reminding of the way a patient talks during psychotherapy, returning to the past, making free associations, saying anything coming to his mind in no particular order, while also using the contrast past-present, certainty-uncertainty, forgetting-remembering. When the poetic persona does not know who put the bookmark, he

takes a distance from himself, and examines himself from another perspective, from the outside, trying perhaps to behave like a therapist. This is all done by memory and imagination. The reflection on how memory and imagination have the same result in the poem *We Both Knew* seems like a comment on the poem *The Bookmark*, which presents in a practical case the way memory is misleading, how the narrator forgets who has put the bookmark, a bus ticket, in a book. There is a strong interconnection between these two particular poems. First, the poet presents the case of forgetting then remembering about the bookmark, then come the thoughts and theorizing on why and how memory and illusions go hand in hand. When you forget something, you try to understand and make suppositions about what could have happened. This stimulates the work of imagination. A common forgetting incident is, in Swift's poem, the occasion for imagining and making suppositions as well as for introspection and self-analysis. *The Bookmark* suggests two sides of the poetic persona, the one from the past and the one from the present. It is natural to presuppose that anyone can change over time, yet he remains the same person. Evolving implies understanding the way someone evolves, or grows up, and this in turn implies self-understanding. Wordsworth's double awareness of memory could be used to explain the connection between the past and present selves. Wordsworth believed that past and present selves may be united into a coherent sense of identity by means of memory. He says about his role as a poet that he sees himself as "two consciousness, conscious of myself/ And of some other being,"¹ referring to "the person he is and the person he was" (Güneş 185). Yet, the memory finds its place, in terms of time, in the character's story's presentation or, in our case, in the poetic persona's introspection process. As Freud claimed, there is no recognition of the passage of time in the unconscious.² This reinforces the idea that memories are not necessarily aspects of the past.

The Romantic poets have given expression and artistic form to creativity, imagination, and sensitivity, which will always be relevant to human psychology. There is a general tendency for readers, critics, and writers to associate lyricism with Romantic poetry. This can be seen in the moments when such Romantic tropes are introduced in Swift's novels. Such moments include reflecting on the past, present, and future, as well as on certain moments in one's life; they include imagining stories about another character, and expressing one's feelings of joy when walking throughout the city, as well as other kinds of dreamy states. Romantic tropes lead readers to apply the pattern of Romantic poetry in order to experience a novel's, or poem's, lyricism more intensely. These tropes are there to compensate for moments when prose or poetry may not really use lyrical language (Drobot 2014).

Memory and Imagination

Creating a whole story around the ticket is the result of a failure in memory and of using imagination instead, to compensate for it in the poem *The Bookmark*. In *We Both Know*, memory and imagination are no longer distinctive: "Those images of what might have been/ Can't be so different now/ From images of things that really were, / Memory and longing amounting to the same" (Swift 240). Anything we actually do, and anything we imagine, is part of ourselves, speaks about our personality. We have here two issues when we notice the intersection and overlapping between memory and imagination: double awareness of memory and false memories. Time in the case of the double awareness of memory refers to both the present and past identity of characters; their identities are united imaginatively with the help of memory.

¹ The Prelude, II, 32-3.

² In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, we may find that "...it is a prominent feature of unconscious processes that they are indestructible. In the unconscious nothing can be brought to an end, nothing is past or forgotten" (Freud 577). In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, Freud claims that "The unconscious is quite timeless," adding this as a footnote in 1907.

Psychoanalysis talks of false memories from the past that influence our present-day perception. Bringing the past into the present has a therapeutic function, according to Freud. It is not healthy to repress memories. Freud formulated his "Seduction Theory" in which he argued that "hysteria" resulted from repressed memories of childhood sexual trauma. Bringing these memories into consciousness would lead to alleviation of the hysterical symptom, he believed. Yet, we may have difficulties remembering events accurately. This is because we forget as well as because we sometimes tend to embellish the past if we feel nostalgia or even because since it all happened long ago, we lose the distinction between facts and imagination. We confuse what we wished for back then with what really happened.

The issue of events not faithfully stored present in *We Both Know* and *The Bookmark* make us go back to the theories of psychoanalysis:

[...] related events are not stored faithfully, independently, and veridically, but rather the individual events are used to construct an integrated memory trace that represents the gist or general meaning of the episode (e.g., Bransford and Franks, 1972). [...] original events cannot be distinguished from the potentially false inferences in a memory representation. [...] false memories could include retrieval of false suggestions or inferences, or retrieval of blends of original and intervening (false) information (e.g., Loftus & Hoffman, 1989). (qtd in Gleaves, Smith et al, 3-28)

Indeed, the poetic persona in both poems claims that memory is like imagination, that is, not faithful to reality. In *We Both Know*, the poetic persona speaks about images, that is, about fragments from memory. The word "know" in the title suggests something known for sure, it suggests facts, and not hypothesizing about what could have been. This shows that sometimes we can be so sure that we remember events correctly, that we mistake imagination for remembrance. However, false memories can have something truthful about them. They can be impressions, what we understood from certain events and the way we perceived them even if what truly happened was different. False memories are not necessarily fake, but only a matter of subjective perception, which is why they still influence our whole later development, as Freud claims. The longing in Swift's poem can be interpreted as a fantasy, which in Freud's theories means something as real as facts. Fantasies have a great impact on our development as adults. They shape our whole personalities later, even if we had some fantasies, and illusions, or false impressions in childhood. Even if our vision of events was wrong, it was the way we felt them and were affected by them. This accounts for the blurring of boundaries between imagination and memory.

Closely linked to this issue is the unknown side of the self to which access is given through unfaithful memories and imagination. In psychoanalysis, a mistake is more valuable than certain action performed in the right way, meaning that somebody may forget incidents, actions, thoughts, which highlight his or her issues. What is forgotten is more important as it helps to gain insight into a person's true self. *The Bookmark* refers to "All the books you meant to read" but never did, suggesting that part of your personality was left unexplored. In *We Both Know*, the lines "We never say, we never will," suggest what is left unsaid, what is left aside, like the unopened books, what is never explored further.

Reasons for going back to the past are present in the two poems. In *The Bookmark*, the lines "the bus ticket falling from page thirty-one" prompt self-analysis, meaning that the event in the present is triggering analysis of memories. In *We Both Know*, the lines "It hovers now around us when we meet/ Like some trick of light" suggest that here is the key to understanding the present-day situation.

Past and present selves meet in the two poems. The poetic persona in *The Bookmark* wonders about the person who put the ticket there and at the end of the poem we read "You know, of course, it must have been you" (Swift 257). In *We Both Know*, the lines "Our eyes meet" and "We burned but never were consumed/ This soft ash keeping in the fire" suggest the individuation process still in progress. Past and present selves meet in Swift's novels as well as in his poems. Connecting past selves with present selves is

not a “straightforward process of cross-identification, but a reconstruction of disorderly, discontinuous fragments of memories.” The therapeutic function of the narrative consists in establishing coherence between past and present selves (Lea, 2005). This reminds one of Carl Gustav Jung’s individuation. Jung described this very process as “self-realization”—a “natural transformation,” something that “the unconscious had in mind,”—something that would develop our individual personality; the process by which a person becomes a psychological “individual,” that is, a separate, indivisible unity or “whole.” In Swift’s poems, we could say that individuation takes place by dialogue. In both poems the poetic persona needs to put together different parts of their personality to feel complete. In the first poem, the past and the present should unite and in the second poem, the person he is and the person he would like to be should become one. These aspects can be seen as representing the integration of the psyche that should be achieved according to Jungian therapy: Individuation is the transformational process of integrating the conscious with the personal and collective unconscious (Jung 301). To integrate conscious and unconscious, the first step is to look for the memories that have been suppressed. Thus, psychological traumas will be cured. We can see the process of going to the past and making an effort to remember the real story about the bookmark in Swift’s poem. In the poem *We Both Knew*, we can see what is still left unclear about what is memory and what is fantasy, which is the next step, according to Jungian therapy, understanding your own thoughts and feelings. Then, as we become aware of what happened, we need to have a strong will to feel calm, responsible, at peace with oneself, and fully grown up.

Conclusions

The two poems under analysis cross the border between genres, poetry and prose, while the lyrical effect remains. Prose is mixed with a poetic effect in Swift’s novels, while poems have a prose quality to them, yet retain their lyricism. De Paiva Correia believes that there is always at least some minimal action even in a lyric poem. De Correia claims that “the lyrical mode, similarly to the narrative and dramatic ones, is a powerful transmitter of action” (Ms), and thus can lend itself to a coherent plot. The use of the lyrical mode transmits action, and it is here that the active role of the reader comes in. Hühn also claims that there is always a story, even in lyric poetry. There are always incidents, even in a poem. These features will make poetry suitable for a narratological analysis. According to Hühn:

[...] first, poetry can profitably be analyzed on the basis of narratological categories and thus be compared with prose narratives proper (by poetry, I mean the lyric in the narrow sense, not merely narrative poems such as ballads or verse narratives); and second, events are a prerequisite of narrativity in fictional literature as well as in the lived world. (n.p)

While reading *The Bookmark* and *We Both Know*, we imagine a narrator going back through sorting his memories. At first he forgets and uses imagination, then he remembers what has really happened, in *The Bookmark*. In *We Both Know*, imagination shows what the poetic persona is really like inside, and perhaps is even more relevant than memory. Yet, the memories we go back to are always relevant to our present situation. We do not go back in time to remember a certain detail or incident for nothing, psychoanalysis claims. “Rules in poetry are made only to be broken,” Leech and Short say (12). They divide the use of poetic language into categories such as plain, middle and grand styles. They suggest that there is an aesthetic value common to all these styles which distinguishes poetic language from ordinary language. For the plain styles, we pay attention to the choice and arrangement of words, as Swift does. In order to be surprising, to “Revitalize the language of poetry, the poet draws directly on the resources of contemporary language” (Leech and Short 23). Swift uses both ordinary and poetic language in a surprising mixture.

We notice the theme of memory, of going back to the past, for which Swift is famous in his novels. Swift adds an element of surprise to an apparently ordinary contemplation of the past: the mistake of using imagination instead of going directly to the memories about the certain details analyzed. Yet it is this very mistake which leads to a moment of revelation: memory and imagination are not that different. From this point of view, Swift defamiliarizes the usual expectations from Romantic poetry, where imagination is the source of creativity and wisdom. He uses it interchangeably with memory. At the same time, Swift preserves elements specific to Romanticism, such as the influence of imagination on obtaining moments of revelation. What is more, Swift shares with the Romantic poets, such as Wordsworth, the preference for very simple and clear language, as well as the combination of the ordinary with the extraordinary. From the Romantic culture, Swift's poems raise actually universal issues, transcending the experience shared by one culture alone. Such experiences are not restricted to a certain period of time, as Swift proves. We still judge the world through such experiences. They have not lost their relevance.

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Eugene O'Neill's Romanian Translations as Creative Cultural Responses: Case Study on *Long Day's Journey Into Night*

Abstract: My paper presents several concepts pertaining to translation theory which I found useful in analyzing the Romanian translations from Eugene O'Neill's drama. From these, I move on to presenting the translations from O'Neill's works, with a focus on the Romanian version of *Long Day's Journey Into Night* by Dorin Dron, offering some textual samples for analysis and ending by making a reference to the cultural context of the reception of this particular play.

Keywords: equivalence, correspondence, literary translation, transatlantic connections, drama.

Introduction

Translation theorists seem to agree that literary translation always implies cultural issues, since “not only do cultures express ideas differently, but they also generate concepts and texts in a different way” (Bantaş and Croitoru 19, my translation). And the negotiation of these differences, as Paul Ricoeur points out, requires intercultural translators, that is, cultural bilinguals able to accompany the transfer of the text to the other cultural universe, while fully respecting its landmarks (49). The dynamics of translation, therefore, has to account for the norms, culture, setting and traditions of the source and target languages, brought by the original writer and by the new readership. The stake in translation is the negotiation of a cultural equivalent, i.e. an approximate³ translation of a source language cultural world into a target language cultural word (Newmark 82).

Regarding the concept of equivalence, there is dynamic equivalence (an equivalence of effect) and formal equivalence (an equivalence of message, both as form and content) (Bantaş and Croitoru 43). According to Umberto Eco, the principle of equal reference could be violated for the sake of a *deeply* equivalent translation—therefore, I will pay particular attention to the cases of denotative deviation, that are nonetheless means of achieving cultural correspondence. In her study on *Translation: The Interpretive Model*, Marianne Lederer discusses more extensively the notion of equivalence, making it the basis of her recommended approach to literary translation, termed “interpretive translation.” The idea of *equivalence* (i.e. the faithful rendering of the sense) is opposed to *correspondence* (i.e. word for word translation). In Lederer's opinion, the overuse of correspondences makes for a bad translation, while equivalence itself is “an original correspondence and the general mode of translation” (45).⁴

³ Since the meaning of many words is determined by their collocations, which are culture specific, Newmark recommends that cultural expressions should be clarified by equivalents or paraphrasing (especially in drama that does not allow footnotes).

⁴ Following Koller, Lederer also offers an extremely useful scheme for evaluating equivalence in literary texts: denotative equivalence (information about the extralinguistic reality), connotative equivalence (respecting the style of the original, i.e. the language register, sociolect, etc.), normative equivalence (conforming with the genre),

Analysis

One can say that the transatlantic connection functioned well enough as regards the Romanian literary translations from O'Neill's drama. Foremost among others, Petru Comarnescu initially took on and successfully concluded some of the most difficult of these translation tasks—starting with *Strange Interlude* in 1939, followed by *Mourning Becomes Electra* in 1943 (which he accomplished together with Margareta Sterian). In 1946, he collaborated with Ruxandra Oteteleşanu and Mihail Ranciu for the translation of a volume entitled *Dramele Mării și ale Pământului (Dramas of the Sea and Land)* and in 1946, he published the translation volume *Drame din Marea Dragoste (Dramas of Great Love)*. When analyzing Petru Comarnescu's translations from O'Neill's drama one must take into account the complexity of his cultural endeavor, which spanned more than three decades. His translations, together with those accomplished by Dorin Dron, Sergiu Fărcășan and Aneta Dobre, Ivan Deneș, Alexandru Alcalay and Sima Zamfir, were published in 1968, at the Editura pentru literatură universală, in a three-volume edition of O'Neill's works.

In my assessment of the Romanian translations from O'Neill's dramas, I will employ Lederer's notion of "interpretive equivalence" to investigate the textual versions in terms of the areas of difficulty identified by Leon Levițchi: denotation, emphasis, modality, connotation, coherence, and style. Regarding the last aspect—style—I will be using Levițchi's definition: "the style is the specific way in which the author has organized his message, as regards coherence and expression, with a view to maximum valorization in the conscience of the presumptive receiver" (219, my transl.).⁵ I fully agree with Levițchi that the translator has to be able to transpose himself, through empathy, into the writer's psychology and, consequently, that he/she should "be equally capable of linguistic empathy, of immersion in the style of the author, character and epoch" (223, my transl.). Successful immersion is, nevertheless, inconceivable without a pre-existing common background of experience, or, as Levițchi notes, "our own experience teaches us the premises of linguistic empathy" (223, my transl.). Ultimately, translating a literary author is understood as a matter of "elective affinity"—meaning that one should translate only what one feels a calling to translate. In this respect, Petru Comarnescu's translations are particularly fortunate examples, although not devoid of failings, but other translators in the above-mentioned volumes equally deserve our praise for their achievement. In the following pages I will concentrate on the particularly successful enterprise of Dorin Dron, who offered a balanced literary translation of O'Neill's challenging masterpiece, *Long Day's Journey into Night*,⁶ that proved particularly productive in terms of stage usage.

This translation, as the notes below will reveal, is overall satisfactory and usable for stage purposes, although certain idioms and colloquialisms would certainly need updating. Dron generally achieves successful semantic and syntactic equivalence, respecting both the original shape of the dialogue and the specific acoustic masks of each character. There can be noted several misfires—mostly due to denotation and connotation errors caused by a lack of referential knowledge, especially when O'Neill introduces local names and phrases (see examples 3, 5, 10, 20 below). Stylistically speaking, certain exclamations bring an (originally unintended) negative connotation to the dialogue, while certain paranthetical indications or adjectives are erroneously translated, leading to a change of modality for the respective characters uttering the remarks (see examples 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 below).

pragmatic equivalence (adapted to the reader's knowledge), and formal-aesthetic equivalence (an equivalence of effect).

⁵ A sound analysis of the literary qualities of a translation will have to rely therefore on the previous analysis of the stylistic properties of the source text, an analysis which was provided by the critical survey in the first chapter of my thesis.

⁶ Further parenthetical reference to the play will appear as *LDJN*.

1. You're a fine armful now, Mary (*LDJN* 1304)—Acum are omul pe ce pune mâna, Mary (*Lungul Drum* 234). [Successful semantic equivalence].
2. Yes, it's terrible *the way we all pick on you*, isn't it? You're so abused! (*LDJN* 1306)—Da, e îngrozitor, *nimeni nu face altceva decat să se lege de tine*, nu-i așa? Ești persecutat (*Lungul Drum* 236). [Formal equivalence, lack of correspondence but the transfer of meaning is successful, nevertheless. And "persecutat" is a felicitous equivalent for "abused."]
3. And who do you think I met there, *with a beautiful bun on*? (*LDJN* 1308)—Si închipuie-ti, peste cine crezi că dau acolo, *cu pălăria lui fenomenală pe cap*? (*Lungul Drum* 239). [Misfire, due to lack of knowledge of the original idiom.]
4. He's a wily shanty Mick, that one. He could hide behind a crowscrew (*LDJN* 1308)—Mare vulpoi, irlandezul ăla. Știe strașnic să se ascundă după deget (*Lungul Drum* 240). [Successful semantic equivalence, through corresponding idioms ("wily shanty" for "mare vulpoi" and "Mick" for "Irlandez"), especially the last sentence is a felicitous case of both formal and semantic equivalence.]
5. Harker had as much chance as I would with Jack Johnson. (*LDJN* 1309, here the reference is to a famous prize fighter, but this information was unavailable to the Romanian translator)—Harker făcea mai bine dacă nu venea (*Lungul Drum* 241).
[The lack of referential knowledge leads to eluding the correspondence (replacing "Johnson" with the name of a Romanian prizefighter) by respecting formal equivalence through a short clause.]
6. At Edmund's account of his response to Harker, Tyrone is delighted, although he immediately checks himself: "The devil you did! (frowning)..." (*LDJN* 1309)—Dracu să te ia și pe tine! (no paranthetical indication)" (*Lungul Drum* 242).
[This is a misfire, both from the stylistic and the semantic viewpoint, since Tyrone is not in the habit of swearing so vilely at his children. "Măi să fie" or "Afurisit mai ești" would have been a more proper translation.]
7. Go along with both of you! (*LDJN* 1310)—*Ce proastă sunt* că stau să vă ascult, pe voi doi (*Lungul drum* 244). [The translated exclamation is a misfire since it implies a self-deprecating attitude that does not suit Mary's conceited style.]
8. You can't change the leopard's spots (*LDJN* 1312)—Degeaba vrei să îndrepti un lucru care e născut strâmb (*Lungul Drum* 246). [Misfire. The problem here is the syntagm "care e născut," since "lucru" is incompatible with "născut." The appropriate idiom here would have been "Nu mai înveți calul bătrân să meargă în buiestru."]
9. You evil-minded loafer (*LDJN* 1314)—Netrebnic răuvoitor ce ești (*Lungul Drum* 252). ["Vagabond cu mintea spurcată" is the corresponding appellation. But, as the exclamation is an accusation in self defence, Dron's phrase will do.]
10. I expect *a salary of at least one large iron man* at the end of the week—to carouse on! (*LDJN* 1315)—Mă aștept ca la sfârșitul săptămânii să iau *o leață de maistru fierar*, și atunci... să te ții! (*Lungul Drum* 252). [Misfire due to unknown referent: "the iron man" is slang for dollar. Thus, the ironic implication of Jamie's joke is also lost on the Romanian audience, who might imagine that Jamie is thinking of a reasonable sum of money.]
11. I know how *miserably uncomfortable* you must be (*LDJN* 1317)—Ce ai tu este *un lucru plictisitor*, știu (*Lungul Drum* 255). ["Un lucru plictisitor" is not a felicitous reference to Edmund's disease. "Miserably uncomfortable" would have been better rendered by "discomfort sâcăitor."]
12. Damned lonely (*LDJN* 1352)—foarte deprimat (*Lungul Drum* 315). [Partial semantic equivalence, overtranslation by rendering subtext as text.]
13. "Thickly humorously" (paranthetical indication, *LDJN* 1355)—"cu un umor greoi" (*Lungul Drum* 319). ["Greoi" is not a good translation for "thickly." "Hâtru" would have been more appropriate in this context.]
14. It's nuts—completely nuts! (*LDJN* 1356, Edmund muses humorously about his brother's misadventures)—E tâmpit... Complet tâmpit. (*Lungul Drum* 321; better: "Ce nebunie desăvârșită!"). ["Tâmpit" connotes negatively here.]
15. When reproaching his father with the mistreatment of his mother, Edmund blurts out: "Jesus, when I think of it I hate your guts!" (*LDJN* 1359)—"Isuse, când mă gândesc la toate astea te urăsc pentru

- nesimțirea* de care ai dat dovadă față de ea! (*Lungul Drum* 326). [Lack of syntactic equivalence, overtranslation, negative connotation.]
16. Not so bad, that last, eh? Original, not Baudelaire. Give me credit! (*LDJN* 364)—Nu-i rău, ultima, pe care am spus-o. Nu-i așa? E originală. Nu-i Baudelaire, *dă-mi voie!* (*Lungul Drum* 335, emphasis mine). [This last phrase is reminiscent of Caragilale's heroes drunken argumentation... However, a more appropriate translation would have been "Poți fi mândru de mine!" Overall syntactic and semantic equivalence achieved.]
17. As it is, I will always be a stranger who never feels at home, *who does not really want and is not really wanted, who can never belong*, who must always be *a little in love with death!* (*LDJN* 1365)—Așa cum sunt, mă voi simți întotdeauna un străin, care niciodată nu se simte acasă, *care nu caută și nu e căutat de nimeni, totdeauna dezrădăcinat, și care va trebui să cocheteze mereu cu moartea!*... (*Lungul Drum* 336). [The translation of "want" by "caută" is an interesting attempt at equivalence, especially in the context previously discussed, of neighborly visits. Also, the phrase "a little in love" is felicitously rendered by "să cocheteze."]
18. Had serious accident. The front step tried to trample on me. Took advantage of fog to waylay me (*LDJN* 1365)—Mi s-a întâmplat o nenorocire. Scara de la intrare era să cadă peste mine. M-am împiedicat de atâta ceață (*Lungul Drum* 337). [Jamie's drunken humor is tuned down and rendered strange: Since "to waylay" means "a ataca pe la spate," the humor in Jamie's statement is lost on the Romanian audience, being replaced by a strangely poetical clause: "M-am împiedicat de atâta ceață."]
19. What is a man without a good woman's love? A god-damned hollow shell (*LDJN* 1367)—Ce e un om fără dragostea unei femei cumsecade? *O scoică goală blestemată de Dumnezeu!* (*Lungul Drum* 340). [Surprising translation by correspondence instead of equivalence, leads to stylistic misfire.]
20. She stood it for a while, then she got good and sore (*LDJN* 1368)—Ea a stat cât a stat, dar după aia a început să facă pe languroasa (*Lungul Drum* 341). [Misfire. Denotation and connotation errors.]
21. That last drink—the old K.O. (*LDJN* 1371)—Lasă-mă să dorm (*Lungul Drum* 347) [The translator does not even try to find an equivalent for Jamie's commentary, something like—"Ultimul pahar—m-a făcut praf." Possibly unaware of the meaning of the phrase "K.O."]
22. It's no good. (*LDJN* 1374, 1375)—Așa nu e bine (*Lungul Drum* 351) [Misfire. The suggestion of hopelessness, that was earlier expressed by Mary, is taken over and amplified by Jamie's repetition of the phrase, which the translator fails to render accurately. His option suggests the character's awareness of the situation being amiss, which falsifies Jamie's discourse by introducing an uncharacteristically moralizing tone.]

A comparison of Dron's translation with an excerpt from the same play translated by Mihnea Gheorghiu in his study on the American playwright⁷ is revealing, as an alternative, for the Romanian translators' grasp on this particularly engaging American dramatic text. A stereoscopic investigation of the two versions is presented below, based on an excerpt in which Edmund and Mary discuss about their home:

- EDMUND: Well, it's better than spending the summer in a New York hotel, isn't it? And this town's not so bad. I like it well enough. I suppose because it's the only home we've had.
- MARY: I've never felt it was my home. It was wrong from the start. Everything was done in the cheapest way. Your father would never spend the money to make it right. It's just as well we haven't any friends here. I'd be ashamed to have them step in the door. But he's never wanted family friends. He hates calling on people or receiving them. (*LDJN* 1317)

⁷ The chapter entitled "O antologie de dincolo de zare" was included in Gheorghiu's critical volume *Orientări în literatura străină* (1958).

EDMUND: Eh, tot e mai bine să petreci vara aici, decât într-un hotel la New York. Până la urmă nu e chiar atât de insuportabil. Mie îmi place destul de mult. Pentru că e singura casă pe care am avut-o vreodată.

MARY: Mie nu mi s-a părut niciodată că e casa mea. De la început a fost greșit. Totul a fost făcut *cât mai economic*. Tatăl tău n-a vrut să cheltuiască ca să o facă cum trebuie. *De asta* nici nu am avut prieteni aici. Mi-ar fi o rușine de moarte dacă cineva ar trebui să ne treacă pragul casei. Și pe urmă lui nici nu-i place ideea de a se vizita cu alte familii. (Dron 255)

EDMUND: Oricum, mamă, *dar trebuie să recunoști*/ că e mai bine să ne petrecem vara aici decât într-un hotel *de mâna a doua* din New York, nu-i așa?/ Și târgul ăsta nu-i chiar atât de prăpădit. Nu-mi displace. Poate pentru că e singurul loc unde am fost și *eu* acasă.

MARY: Eu niciodată nu m-am simțit aici la casa mea. Am pornit-o greșit de la început. Totul a fost făcut *din ieftin*. Tatăl tău n-a vrut să scoată un ban mai mult pentru orice i-ar fi dat acestei locuințe un aer mai puțin sordid. *Tot de aceea* n-avem niciodată musafiri. Mi-ar fi și rușine să-i văd intrând pe ușă și *privind prin casă*. *Dar nici alții nu ne duc lipsa*. El nu cheamă și nu primește. *Suntem o familie fără prieteni*. (Gheorghiu, *Orientări* 369)

From the start, it must be said that Gheorghiu's version is an over-translation and therefore more literary than Dron's, which can be more easily adapted for the stage (that is, with fewer cuts). This feature is obvious from the first exclamation: "Well" is rendered by Dron as "Eh" and by Gheorghiu as "Oricum, mamă, dar trebuie să recunoști." Also, the specification "hotel de mâna a doua" does not appear in the original text, even if it can be inferred from the discussion. It is Gheorghiu's intention to create a contrast here and emphasize Tyrone's stinginess. Edmund's original way of talking is modest and affirmative and therefore his appreciation of the town, "I like it well enough," is better rendered by Dron's "Mie îmi place destul de mult" than by Gheorghiu's "Mie nu-mi displace." Also, Gheorghiu's version makes Edmund limit himself egotistically in his speech when referring to feeling "at home": "e singurul loc unde am fost *și eu* acasă," while Dron's "e singura casă pe care am avut-o vreodată" uses the all-inclusive "we," as in the original. Mary's line, on the other hand, contains a common denotation error that both translators make, in rendering the phrase "it's just as well": "*Tot de aceea* n-avem niciodată musafiri" (Gheorghiu) and "*De asta* nici nu am avut prieteni aici" (Dron). Instead of the resigned contentment expressed by Mary's use of the above-mentioned connector, the two Romanian versions presuppose a simple causal relation, while the right translation would have been "E chiar mai bine" or "De aia nici nu regret." Leaving aside minor distinctions, the two translators have divergent options for Mary's complaint about her husband not wanting to receive company. While Dron's is synthetically concise: "Și pe urmă lui nici nu-i place ideea de a se vizita cu alte familii," breaking the syntactic pattern and making her statement sound less bitter, Gheorghiu's version is obviously an over-translation that includes an inversion of the two statements: "*Dar nici alții nu ne duc lipsa*. El nu cheamă și nu primește. *Suntem o familie fără prieteni*." While the first sentence is absent from the original, the last one is an equivalent of the sentences that precedes the middle one in the original and the cumulative effect of this juxtaposition is quite dramatic. The following examples try to offer more focused illustrations of the above-noted tendencies and differences:

1. "Jamie and I would be bored stiff" (*LDJN* 1318).

"Nici mie nici lui Jamie, asta nu ne ține nici de cald nici de rece" (Dron 256).

"Și eu și Jamie ne-am fi plictisit la culme" (Gheorghiu 370).

2. "Just because I feel rotten and blue, I suppose" (*LDJN* 1318).

"Poate pentru că eu mă simt așa de obosit și de melancholic" (Dron 256).

"Poate pentru că mă simt cam prăpădit; nu știu" (Gheorghiu 317).

3. Mary—*sharply* (LDJN 1318)—“cu severitate” or “şficuitor”
“Cu un ton acru” (Dron 257)
“cu arţag” (Gheorghiu 371)

4. “take a nap” (LDJN)—“să iau un hap (Gheorghiu, sic!)”—“să trag un pui de somn” (Dron)

In example one, the phrase “bored stiff” is felicitously translated by Gheorghiu as “plictisit la culme,” while Dron’s variant misfires by being too elaborate. In the second example, both translators have some difficulty in rendering the colloquialisms “rotten and blue” (“amărât şi trist”), but Gheorghiu’s misfire is rather surprising. Like Dron, he occasionally lacks knowledge of an idiom—such as in the fourth example (where he interprets “nap” as “pill”) and sometimes he proves a bit careless in rendering the modality of the parenthetical indication, as in example three, where both translators suggest modalities that connote negatively for Mary’s character. On the whole, it can be appreciated that both Dron and Gheorghiu prove thorough knowledge of English and show a real capacity in translating the overall meaning of the text accurately, although one cannot overlook certain problematic areas, especially linked to connotation and modality.

The sound achievement of Dorin Dron is confirmed by the always-successful productions of this drama on the Romanian stages, from the late sixties until around the year 2000. If Dron’s textual version had not been so carefully geared to reflect the original mood of O’Neill’s drama, it could not have supported the stage success of its various performances. Some of the most successful were the 1968 productions of the play, simultaneously staged in Iaşi and Cluj.⁸

Conclusions

Analyzing the play’s reception at that historical moment, drama critic Ileana Popovici expressed her conviction that the public was attracted by the deeper significance of this drama and not by its superficial negative vision—severely criticized by Mihnea Gheorghiu in his literary criticism due to its focus on the misery of alcoholism and drug addiction. Instead, as she points out, the essential message of the play was experienced on the level of “understanding and describing artistically and complexly the tragic dismemberment of personality” (Popovici 75, my transl.), a fact which posed a challenge both for the translator and for the directors approaching the text. In her review, Popovici further insisted upon the solid tradition of O’Neill’s plays on the Romanian stage, which had always been drawn to the theater of great passions, to “vigorous and dense plays built on tough, decisive situations” (“O viziune...” 75, my transl.). An important piece of information regarding O’Neill’s theater is that in the sixties there occurred a change of focus in the public interest, from plays exhibiting a linear dramatic structure (such as *Anna Christie*, *Beyond the Horizon* or *Desire under the Elms*), to those whose structure was “less clear, ample and ramified, full of diffuse, troubled states,” their action unfolding in a strangely poetical and fascinating universe—such as *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *A Touch of the Poet*, and *Long Day’s Journey* (“O viziune...” 75). In the critic’s opinion, this change of focus denoted a change in the receptivity of the modern audience, reflected by its increasingly complex sensitivity, with the interest being displaced from the action

⁸ The Cluj team was lead by director Crin Teodorescu, with Liviu Ciulei as stage designer. The distribution included Silvia Ghelan (Mary), Valentino Dain (James), George Motoi (Jamie), Ştefan Sileanu (Edmund), and Stela Cosmuţa (Cathleen), while the Iaşi team was led by director Sorana Coroamă, with Hristofenia Cazacu as stage designer. The distribution included Adina Popa (Mary), Teofil Vâlcu (James), Sergiu Tudose (Jamie), Costel Constantin (Edmund) and Silvia Popa (Cathleen).

itself to the undercurrent of meaning reflected in the implications of words and deeds. This ample subjective and intellectual turn in the writing of psychological dramas, corresponded to a change in the style of acting, which became less melodramatic and more self-reflective, as required by the pervading trend of stage realism cultivated by most Romanian directors. In this respect, the textual version responsibly provided by the translator was further processed and refined by the artistic teams, who juxtaposed onto it their own stage adaptation and thus succeeded in rendering O'Neill's original vision through the prism of their own principles and creativity.

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The Role of Linguistic Knowledge in Professional Communication

Abstract: Professional communication is a kind of persuasive communication which aims at changing the receivers' attitude towards an object. Persuasion in communication can be discharged through appropriate language externalization. Language externalization, as linguists argue, depends on phonology, and on syntactic and semantic efficiency in a particular language. However, in professional communication it is widely perceived that the speaker's syntactic and semantic proficiency by itself cannot create the sense of persuasion, so that many obstacles like ambiguity, unintelligibility, non-transparency, infeasibility and unacceptability occur that make this communication useless. This paper argues that persuasion in professional communication can be created not only through syntactic and semantic proficiency, but also through communicative competence, which means the creative use of words in certain situations and contexts, following the quantitative and qualitative maxim and truth value of information and focusing on acceptability, possibility, feasibility and the occurrence of meaning in a particular speech situation.

Keywords: quantity maxim, quality maxim, linguistic knowledge, linguistics competence, communicative competence.

Introduction

'Professional communication' is a process of transmitting a particular knowledge to a specific audience for a particular purpose. It aims at changing that audience's attitude towards an object by giving true information about it. Expression of true information about an object depends on the appropriate language externalization and language externalization is intrinsically governed by the sender's linguistic knowledge (Chomsky 2012). In this sense, 'professional communication,' whose sole aim is the changing attitude, is different from 'general communication.' In 'general communication,' we communicate the information appropriately and correctly, but in 'professional communication' we emphasize the aim of communication. Since this communication is projected for a purpose, it is named 'persuasive communication.'

Persuasion is a cognitive process produced by a stimulus that can be internal or external. 'Professional communication' is an important external stimulus of persuasion. This communication, as an external stimulus of persuasion, should compensate the need of a receiver, a context, and a situation and create intelligibility. The compensation of the above aspects in 'professional communication' is flowed through language. Language is an absolute externalization of linguistic competence. Ultimately, linguistic knowledge plays an important role as external stimuli in persuasion. Nowadays, 'professional communication' faces a tremendous poverty of stimuli, so that it cannot persuade the receiver about the goal and purpose of science and technology, use of natural resources, maintenance of the workplace environment. So that many different problems are seen in the field of science and technology, such as the variation of views about natural truth in science, use of technology for the destruction of nature, scientific research without a specifying goal and the use of technology for uncertain purposes. This poverty of stimuli is generated by some obstacles like ambiguity, unintelligibility, non-transparency, infeasibility, unacceptability, and ungrammaticality. This paper argues that all these obstacles can be eliminated through linguistic knowledge. In particular, it defines linguistic knowledge as language competence, such as phonological-syntactic, semantic knowledge and communicative competence. The sole aim of

‘professional communication’ can be fulfilled by emphasizing not only the syntactic and semantic knowledge as language competence that native speakers follow when they speak their languages correctly and appropriately in ‘general communication’, but also the communicative competence. This communicative competence is defined as the creative use of words in a particular situation and context, quantitative and qualitative maxim, truth value of information and emphasis on acceptability, feasibility and occurrence of a particular meaning in a particular speech situation (Mey, LJ 1993).

The Function, Goal, Purpose and Principles of ‘Professional Communication’

This communication is both spoken and written and is used in any formal expression. For example, when we write a brochure or a user manual about a particular product or when we speak about an invention or innovation at a conference, we use this communication. Second, this communication is also used in classroom, when we motivate students for a particular activity and guide and direct students and employees in our company. Third, this is used in commanding other co-workers and assistants about their work. For example, any type of memo or letter regarding the solution of a problem occurring in a subunit is a sample of ‘professional communication.’ Fourth, it is used in managing the system of an industry, institute, and organization. For example, when we write a project proposal and a project report or any minutes about the function of an organization, we use this communication. In all these functions of this communication, an important action carried out by the sender is persuasiveness. The sender wants to give appropriate information about an object or topic about which the receiver’s attitude must be changed. Overall, we can say this communication is used in teaching and research in science, technology and business.

The important goal of this communication is to make technocrats understand the knowledge properly, without any ambiguity. Knowledge understanding is based on two components: message and content. The ‘message’ is the theme of the language the sender uses to convey content. So, the understanding of the message depends on the sender’s competency about the phonetics, semantics, syntax and pragmatics of the particular language in which the communication occurs (Mey 1993). Sometimes problems occur due to the message unintelligibility. For example, the receivers or audiences do not have the same range of competency about the respective language the senders have, the receiver may not understand the sender’s message. The middle level of receivers, who have little less competency, face problems in understanding, but they can manage. The low level of receivers, who do not have language competence, cannot understand the speaker’s knowledge at all. In the academic or technical platform, all these three types of audience are seen. Here, the sender faces many problems in formulating audience friendly language. The understanding of the content depends on the receiver’s competency on that particular approach and the theory based on that particular subject. Here language also plays an important role. The second important goal of this communication is to create a tone. The tone refers to the senders’ attitude and emotion toward a subject and a receiver. The tone can be formal and informal. It can be positive and negative. It can also be authentic and non-authentic. The sender creates a specific tone using specific words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. For example, the first-person singular pronoun “I” creates more authenticity than the first-person plural pronoun “we.” A noun phrase with a pre-modifier creates a more natural tone than a noun phrase with a post-modifier. Sometimes problems occur in this communication due to unauthorized information. This happens when the sender cannot formulate appropriate language and create an authentic tone.

The important purpose of this communication is to change the receivers’ attitude rather than their behavior. Changing their attitude depends on changing their thinking, beliefs and reasoning. The belief and reasoning about a context can be changed through sufficient proof and argument. Therefore, professional communication always provides the receiver with true argument. The second purpose of this

communication is to change the receiver's opinion. The opinion is associated with emotion. It can be changed if the receiver is provided with reasoning related to context.

Generally speaking, this communication follows four principles: clarity, accuracy, precision and relevance.

Clarity means you can express your meaning exactly. If you want to express an idea exactly, you must think clearly about this idea. So, clarity is related with thinking and its expression. Further, if you do not express your ideas clearly, the receiver will not be able to evaluate whether what you are saying is true or worth listening to. So, this communication believes in the clarity of thinking.

Being true is being accurate. The sender should give accurate data and credible information. Accuracy is very important in scientific quantitative judgment. Accurate information can lead one to believe the truth of the result of an experiment. So, professional communication always believes in the accuracy of information.

Precision means that if we omit any relevant idea about an object, we may fail to convince our receiver. Specific enough information about any topic can help audience gain complete knowledge about that specific content. The degree of precision sometimes substantiates the information. So, professional communication must provide as much detailed information on a particular issue as possible.

Relevance means what is important for our research question. Many arguments can be indirectly related with that question but not all are relevant. Only those which are directly linked with our question are relevant. So professional communication emphasizes only the important issues, makes internal relations among these issues and justifies how a particular issue is important in a particular context.⁹

Persuasiveness

Professional communication is persuasive communication. It is an act of influencing the receiver's mind through arguments and reasons. In other words, persuasion is the process of making someone take a certain course of action, assent to a proposition, by appealing to both feelings and intellect (Sandell 1977). It means changing that particular receiver's attitude about an object through communication, so that the receiver can respond.

The process of this communication can be split into four components, all of them involving linguistic knowledge. These can be comprehension, acceptance, change of attitude, and retention.

Comprehension occurs when we understand the content of the message, its propositions and conclusion. Comprehension leads receivers to consider their attitude.

Acceptance involves explaining why a particular style of language is used and justifying subjective truth and validity of content. Here, the receiver finds out the positive ideas about the content.

The change of attitude involves beliefs, evaluation and intentions. Retention means remembering content, message, and attitude for a long time.

The effect of persuasion is measured by the receiver's response when he/she changes his/her attitude towards an object. This response is an important part of communication, and is comprised of four constituents: speaker, message, content, and the receiver's response, the message being the actual carrier of information, and the sender the one who tries to change the receiver's attitude. So, persuasive communication is, however, not a unitary process. It is assumed to be a series or spectrum of effects that may be in combination or isolation defined as change in beliefs, evaluation and the initiation of the receiver (Sandell 1997).

⁹ Anderson, M., P.K. Nayer and M. Sen. *Critical Thinking, Academic Writing and Presentation Skills*. Kottayama: Mahatma Gandhi University, 2013. Print.

Linguistic Knowledge

Linguistic knowledge is interpreted in two ways.¹⁰ First, it is the unconscious knowledge that speakers have about their language and, second, it is a specific approach of linguistics to study language data. For example, the minimalist program, the GB theory and the transformational grammar. Here, we are dealing with the first type of linguistic knowledge, that is, language designed in communication and the way it creates meaning. This knowledge is about the mental reality underlying every communicative behavior. Chomsky says: "There is a dedicated language faculty that interfaces (with other external) systems that use the information provided by the language faculty to perform various actions. These external systems can only access information presented in certain forms; to be usable, the language must provide information in the appropriate form" (*Architecture* 64). It means linguistic knowledge is primarily concerned with the sender's language competence. Chomsky says that competence refers to the idealized speaker-hearer's ability to associate sounds and meanings strictly in accordance with the rules of his language.¹¹ The important aim of the linguistic knowledge is to describe how language is a combination of two interfaces like sound and meaning and how meaning is created, using language in different contexts and situations. This knowledge also explains the acceptable and the unacceptable and how grammar, society and the structure of mind are correlated.

The sound knowledge of language competence is not enough to communicate effectively. It can help us communicate grammatically, but it may not be a helpful tool to communicate in different situations, places, and contexts where these can change the interpretation of the linguistic construction. So, the sender needs language competence and communicative competence. Chomsky argues that:

However, it is equally clear that the actual observed use of language—actual performance—does not simply reflect the intrinsic sound–meaning connections established by the system of linguistic rules. Performance involves many other factors as well. We do not interpret what is said in our presence simply by application of the linguistic principles that determine the phonetic and semantic properties of an utterance. Extralinguistic beliefs concerning the speaker and the situation play a fundamental role in determining how speech is produced, identified, and understood. (*Language and Mind* 102).

It means language is used in relation with situations, places and contexts, that is, with the communicative competence. Further, (Dell Hymes 1972) argues that speakers who would be able to produce all the grammatical sentences of a language, would be institutionalized if they went about trying to do so without consideration of the appropriate context of use, and of the social and culturally determined norms for production and interpretation. He speaks about four aspects of the communicative competence. His first argument regards appropriateness. It means to what extent a potential communicative form is suitable. The second is possibility. It means whether the interpretation of a form exists. The third is about feasibility. It means whether it is possible under particular circumstances. The fourth is about occurrence. It means whether it is really enacted. Further, Hymes argues that speakers have to know not only what is grammatically correct but what is communicatively appropriate in any given context (*Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* Vol. 2). Communicative competence depends on both the knowledge and the use of language. In support of this argument, linguists argue that the meaning of a sentence can be referential and contextual. The referential meaning is non-relative and the contextual meaning is relative (Stanley 133-165). The interpretation of meaning is related with the context, situation and the social setting. When the meaning of the message becomes appropriate in a particular context, and situation, then the process that makes it appropriate is called knowledge of the communicative competence.

¹⁰ Cristal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. India: Blackwell Publishing, 2003. Print.

¹¹ Chomsky, N. *Language and Mind*. UK: CUP, 2006. Print.

When we communicate, we must emphasize the meaning our language denotes and what meaning we want to create in a specific situation and settings. If our intension is not communicated appropriately and it is not contextualized here, our language is grammatical but it lacks communicative competence. So, linguistic knowledge means both language competence and communicative competence.

Linguistic Knowledge and Professional Communication

As I have stated above, the sole aim of professional communication is to persuade our receivers and change their attitude towards a particular object through the information that our language explains. This whole mechanism happens through understanding, evaluation, and initiation. In this process, language plays an important role of persuasion. Here, linguistic knowledge as competence in a particular language helps us in formulating persuasive language.

Linguists argue that effective and persuasive language must be designed to achieve force, directness, freshness, and the receiver's interest. Force and directness can be achieved if we use simple sentences, figures of speech, imagination, restatement and repetition, devices of direct discourse such as rhetorical questions, personification and the first-person pronoun. All these are knowledge of linguistic competency. All these achievements can be seen in professional communication if the message is comprehended. A sentence is the smallest unit of a message. The understanding of the message depends on words used in a sentence and the sentence used for a particular context. Most importantly, the meaning of a message is conveyed through words. The sense of words plays as stimuli to motivate the receiver. So, linguists argue that the meaning of the word in a sentence is the building block of the total meaning of the sentence. If the word meaning is unknown, the total meaning of a sentence cannot be comprehended. In professional communication, the speaker should use high frequency and widely used words. Then, every word has its specific strategy. For example, action should be expressed through verbs of action rather than nouns and adjectives. Choosing the right words and their order in a sentence are also important. Only the right words can convey the right meaning. There are particular combinations like noun-verb, verb—noun verb—adverb and preposition—noun, and the speaker should select the right combination of word pairs for each particular context. Abstract words sometimes create ambiguity. Concrete and specific words help receivers understand precisely what we mean. If the sender uses unfamiliar words or technical terms, then he/she should give their discrimination and synonymy, so that the receiver can easily understand the unfamiliar words. Otherwise, inappropriate words can distract our reader from the message. There are some words that can be used only in the active voice. If we use these words in the passive voice, they may not enable us to convey the appropriate meaning. So, the receiver should pay attention to the way in which words are naturally used.

A word can have a denotative, a connotative and a literary meaning. The sender should be very careful about the way he/she wants to use the word.

The denotative meaning always creates good understanding and clarity. Further, when the sender chooses words, he/she should consider the readers' cultural and educational status. He/ She should use the same words each time he/she refers to the same idea. Linking and eco words are also important in this communication. They structure ideas and sentences coherently.

Persuasion also depends on the sentences we use. Linguists state that the simple sentence helps receivers comprehend the message. The sender can create force through simple sentences. The sentence in the active voice is more effective than that in the passive voice. Research shows that receivers comprehend active sentences more rapidly than the passive ones. The active sentence eliminates the vagueness and ambiguity that often characterize the passive voice. Here, it does not mean that the passive voice is always avoided.

Sometimes, the use of short sentences bores the receiver, so short sentences should be combined. Similarly, the sentence structure should be varied, because same structure sentences make the receiver feel monopolized by the sender and may lose the ability to emphasize major points and deemphasize minor points. When we have many complex ideas and they are interrelated, we should use long sentences. When we want to emphasize a particular point, we should use short sentences. For persuasive communication, the sender should formulate simple sentences, which does not mean simplifying the speaker's thought (Anderson 2011). Thought simplifying may not create persuasiveness. The language of persuasion should be inclusive language. It should include all persons and avoid gender-discriminated language. Senders can have all these ideas if they have linguistic competence.

Since the aim of professional communication is to change the receiver's attitude through appropriate information, the message that contains information must be systemized. Changing the receiver's attitude is a psychological mechanism in which the receiver undergoes a series of actions. First, the receiver pays attention to the sender's message, then tries to believe the content of the message, then evaluates it and starts his/her response. In this case, if the sender's message or content cannot motivate the receiver, there is no persuasion. Here, the sender should try to make the receivers trust, believe the sender and the context. If the receiver trusts the sender's information, the receiver can accept and change his/her mind about the content. Linguistic competence only helps formulate grammatical and meaningful language, but it does not emphasize the receiver's knowledge, situation, and context where the standing meaning of a particular sentence can be changed. The receiver will trust the sender easier if the sender knows how to communicate, how to use his/her language and content in that particular situation. Grice,¹² for instance, emphasizes the cooperative principle. The content must follow the context and situation. Then, one has to say only what one believes it is true and only if one has adequate evidence for it. Also, the sender's contribution should be relevant to that particular situation and he/she should avoid obscurity and ambiguity and the content should be brief and written/spoken in a certain order. According to Grice, the information about an object should be given following that specific situation and the need of that particular audience.

Any sentence must have a certain meaning. That meaning can be acceptable, unacceptable, possible, and impossible in a particular situation. Similarly, a meaning of a particular sentence can be variable when it is spoken to different types of audience and in different types of situations and places. In professional communication, the variable of particular meaning of a particular sentence creates ambiguity and does not create the sense of persuasion. Therefore, the sender of professional communication should analyze the meaning of the sentence, whether it is appropriate or not in the situation. The sender should try to know whether the meaning is feasible or not in the real world and should search whether that meaning is real, objective or not (*International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*, Vol. 4, 89). If the sender has knowledge about these functions of meaning, the professional communication will not have any obstacle in changing the attitude of the audience. This knowledge is an important part of the communicative competence. Thus, the communicative competence plays as important a role in professional communication, as does the linguistic competence.

¹² Grice, H.P. "Logic and Conversation." *Syntax and Semantics*. vol.3 edited by P. Cole and J. Morgan. Academic Press, 1975. Print.

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Conclusions

To sum up, it can be stated that professional communication is a process of perception, acceptance, and initiation of response. In this process, persuasion plays an important role which is a cognitive process stimulated by language only. Language is a tool of thought and its function is expression (Chomsky 2012). The knowledge that formulates expression and thought is linguistic knowledge, which can further be classified as linguistic competence and communicative competence. The linguistic competence, which is acquired by any ideal speaker, is about the grammar of a particular language. Since professional communication is a persuasive communication and it is related with a cognitive process, communication should emphasize the linguistic knowledge as communicative competence and linguistic competence.

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Your Career Plan: Reflection and Research-based Activities

Abstract: Since the world of work seems to be more and more sophisticated and complex in terms of requirements nowadays, thinking ahead about one's career is an important aspect to be taken into account from the outset of one's university studies and even earlier. The present paper puts forth some of the envisaged learning outcomes of the seminar "English for Professional Communication" as taught in the Polytechnica University of Bucharest and some examples of practical activities. It has in view the possibility of enriching the current seminar by means of addressing a variety of topics related to one's professional life and of providing students with the opportunity to engage in seminar activities meant to raise self-awareness and awareness of some realities of the world of work.

Keywords: English for Professional Communication, soft skills, company life, education, life experience

Introduction

Since one's relationship with one's work has tremendous importance on one's inner and outer life quality, approaching it with care and seriousness from an early age seems a pre-requisite for a successful career. One's innate skills, tendencies, and preferences are already visible in childhood; later on, one's educational context, family background and added life experience will channel one's attention into certain domains of interest. University comes to hone incipient specific skills, to provide specific knowledge and to assist the individual in his/her attempt to develop "vertically," namely to become really good in a certain professional area. That being said, although the technical expertise as such remains the main goal to focus on during one's years of study, other types of abilities seem to make the difference between a successful professional and an average one, abilities which have acquired the general name of "soft skills." On the other hand, the issue of the world of work itself also needs to be addressed before one's actual graduation, in terms of the opportunities and limitations to be dealt with out there. Therefore, both introspection and research seem to be essential early steps to a thriving career, as studies on successful career development have repeatedly shown. While research on the employment process will raise awareness of the realities of the job market, introspection will hopefully result in self-awareness, which is, in its turn, a sub-component of a concept much hailed nowadays, namely "emotional intelligence," defined as "the abilities to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and in others" (Goleman 14). Thus, "self-awareness is the most crucial developmental breakthrough for accelerating personal leadership growth and authenticity. Learning to pause to build self-awareness is an evolving process critical to leader success" (Cashman 1).

Given all this, one needs to practice being one's future self quite early: "If you want to be productive, the first question you need to ask yourself is: Who do I want to be? Another question is: Where do I want to go? Chances are that the answers to these questions represent growth in some direction. And while you can't spend *all* your time pursuing those objectives, you definitely won't get there if you don't spend *any* of your time pursuing them" (Bregman 1).

The present paper focuses on the possibility of enriching the seminar "English for Professional Communication" so as to find a means to highlight the issue of self-awareness, and the awareness of those skills to be either discovered within oneself or taught, improved and capitalized on over a lifetime, in order

to have a successful career. Thus, the seminar benefits from the double-fold advantage of CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) methodology, which provides students with the opportunity to get familiar with concepts related to the world of work while upgrading their English language.

Teaching Objectives

A more complex version of the “English for Professional Communication” seminar would have two major focuses: a focus on one’s inner world (who am I/what do I want to do) and a focus on the outer world (what is out there for me to take /how do I proceed in order to take it?). The achievement of these two goals (finding out about one’s own potential as a professional and about the realities of the world of work) will result in an increased ability to successfully use self-knowledge in the process of decision-making related to one’s occupational life. Thus, the overall aim is to help students reach a state of “congruence” (Holland), where one’s potential and desires get to match the professional environment, with its opportunities and challenges.

Breaking down these two goals into more specific objectives will result in the following list of aims, some of which are already valid for the current seminar taught at the Polytechnica University of Bucharest:

- *Provide students with English vocabulary related to the employment process, work environment, work routine;
- *Make students familiar with various soft skills such as emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, time management, networking, team work, etc. and highlight the latter’s impact on one’s professional relationships;
- *Help students develop an awareness of their own interests, skills, values, wants, needs, tendencies related to their professional life;
- *Have students reflect on their strong and their weak points in terms of employability skills;
- *Help students identify skills specific to their domain of work, as well as identify those skills acquired from other life experiences which they can put to use at the workplace;
- *Have students reflect on professional role models and their stories and identify the factors underlying the latter’s success;
- *Have students reflect on their desired job/workplace in terms of company structure, career opportunities, work environment, compensation package, trainings, company’s current and future developments and help them identify such workplaces in the real world;
- *Have students reflect on what internal (subjective/intrinsic) and external (objective/extrinsic) factors would motivate them or hinder their performance at the work place;
- *Help students get familiar with the stages of the employment process and the elements of the employment file: CV, cover letter, interview, 1st year at the workplace;
- *Have students participate in authentic, real-world tasks to be solved in an academic setting and outside of it: mock interview, informational interview, oral presentations, elevator pitch, company identification and research, job shadowing;
- *Help students map out a short-term and long-term career plan and identify possible obstacles in their advancement, as well as strategies to overcome the latter; help students create and maintain a credible and neat professional image through online self-marketing techniques.

Given the nature of its content, the seminar is highly interactive, student-centered and task-based. While the theoretical background is to be provided in terms of simplified definitions and succinct presentations of various concepts (emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence/cultural models, career theory and models, time management, networking etc.), practical activities should remain the highlight of

this class. The two major goals stated earlier call for two major types of tasks to be used: reflection and research. While, indeed, one may argue that in the learning process most of the tasks assigned involve both reflection and research, we have chosen to stick to this somewhat forced classification simply because practice has shown us that it adds to the overall feeling of structure and organization we repeatedly needed to rely on, while dealing with such ineffable and abstract concepts as those mentioned above.

Sample Activities

Here are some of the tasks that could contribute to raising awareness of the realities of the world of work. Some have been already assigned during the English for Professional Communication seminar; the students' feedback through mini-questionnaires has proven their efficiency and they have made the subject of other articles of ours. Others are yet to be tested and given the true measure of their effectiveness.

*Reflection-based Activities

Reflection on one's personality type (Myer Briggs Type Indicator, Johary Window Questionnaire, Multiple Intelligences Theory, Cultural Orientation Map), skills, interests and values and reflection on how the latter could be of interest to a prospective employer:

Examples:

- 1) Task 1: "Skills I can transfer": Comment on the skills enhanced by your extra-curricular activities/hobbies/interests and how they may help you in your occupational life.
- 2) Task 2: "Promoting Myself": Prepare an Elevator Pitch and deliver it in front of the class
- 3) Task 3: "Looking Back" Essay: Comment on various factors that you think may have shaped your career choice (family and cultural background, role models, gender-related stereotypes, personal values, etc.)
- 4) Task 4: "Looking Forward" Essay: "Who will I be at the workplace?" Make a presentation of your personal image in terms of employability skills. It can take the form of a diary page, a video, a collage, a letter of recommendation, an official employee appraisal or any other artistic expression that would capture your main assets.

Reflection on one's philosophy related to the world of work:

Examples:

- 1) Task 1: Discuss the following questions: What will you work for? Do you see your future work as a job, a career, or a vocation? When will you consider yourself a successful professional? What role will communication play in your future job?
- 2) Task 2: Watch the 3 inspirational videos and briefly describe the authors' underlying philosophy of success. Comment on how it resembles/differs from yours. Examples: Alain de Botton's *A Kinder, Gentler Philosophy of Success*, Susan Cain's *The Power of Introverts*, Steve Job's 2005 *Stanford Commencement Speech*
- 3) Task 3: "Work and Play" Essay: Reflect on the life/work balance and on the subjective experiences/objective outcomes balance ("enjoy the process and/or the product")

Reflection on one's preferred style of approaching a task at hand (working style/learning style):
PhotoVoice Assignment (Examples: document how you approach the stages of a project/ a typical day at

the university/ how you learn for an exam). *Follow-up*: What surprising things have you found about yourself? How will your working style help you /hinder your performance further on in your occupational life? How will you tackle the areas that need improvement (Tip: try the 21- day habit formation theory!)

Reflection on one's ideal job and work place: Presentation "My Own Company" (current and future developments, routines, prospects of promotion, compensation package, work environment, on-the-job trainings, schedule, organogram.)

Research-based Activities:

Job research: Reflect on possible ways of finding about vacancies and decide on the most efficient one. Participate in a job fair and present findings in terms of career opportunities, challenges for undergraduates/newly graduates, employer's needs, etc.

Informational interview: Identify two professionals working in your domain of study, who have two different positions in their company. Carry out an interview in terms of: a typical day at the office, responsibilities, job security, job satisfaction, corporate ethics, business etiquette, dress code, networking, deadlines (Job shadowing someone would be an even more relevant task!) How do their answers differ from one another? How do their answers differ from your own expectations?

Company Research: Write an informational paper on a real company you would like to work for (company history, company values, company outlook, typical career path, salary information, work environment, life style impact) and describe the place and the responsibilities you would have in it.

Preparing for the transition from university to work: Identify a vacancy you would like to apply for/Write a customized cover letter and a resume/Create a LinkedIn account.

Participate in a mock interview (assume both roles/ give feedback to colleagues/reflect on how you felt).

Conclusions

As already mentioned, the two types of activities are meant to raise awareness of current requirements, trends, protocols, behavior codes, in short "the ways of the world," where the world stands for the corporate and non-corporate work environment. Equally, they are meant to enhance self-awareness, a prerequisite for getting ahead successfully at the work place, and in life, in general. Given that "self-awareness—a characteristic essential to career success and improved executive leadership—also appears to correlate with overall company financial performance" (Zes and Landis 1), it should be on every company's agenda and on every professional's personal checklist; the start of this kind of personal development could be here and now, with the "English for Professional Communication" class.

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COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATION FROM A SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE - PART II

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Book Review: *The Wet and the Dry: A Drinker's Journey* by Lawrence Osborne

Reviewed work:

Lawrence Osborne, *The Wet and the Dry: A Drinker's Journey*, London: Harvill Secker, 2013, 256 pg.

Lawrence Osborne is predominantly famous for his best-selling 2012 novel *The Forgiven*, set in the Moroccan desert. In another much-acclaimed work, this time non-fiction, *The Wet and the Dry* (published consecutively by Harvill Secker, Crown, and Broadway Books in 2013 and 2014), Osborne takes the readers abroad again, on a journey to the Islamic states, all in order to explore and contrast the abstemious Muslim world with the Western culture of drinking.

The Wet and the Dry is not Osborne's only non-fiction book, as apart from being a novelist, he is also a journalist and a traveler who admits to having "a strong nomadic tendency."¹³ More to the point, Osborne is a confirmed addict, which in the context of the book makes him a "visiting alcoholic" (116), as he refers to himself in the chapter called "My Sweet Islamabad." Consequently, both his peripatetic inclinations and his propensity for drink empower him with particular authority to write what might be called an alco-travelogue. The title of the book is a brilliant play on words, connoting the climate as well as the level of alcoholic saturation. It should be of interest to dipsomaniacs and teetotalers alike, for drink wise or antidrink wise each will find room for individual preferences.

Among many published books on drink, a theme that has been discussed by amateurs and scholars for ages, Osborne's is quite unique because it contextualizes drink in the settings where the teachings of the Quran are in direct conflict with alcohol consumption. The book amalgamates culture, history, even philosophy, but underneath it, all Osborne makes is an attempt to find chinks in the armor of Islamic sobriety: "I might eventually stumble across that most delightful phenomenon, a Muslim alcoholic" (9). And he does strive to achieve this end by visiting hotels and bars, talking to the natives as well as expatriates from the Western world, and contemplating his own feelings and impressions. The book is interspersed with a multitude of details, mostly concerning places and people, providing numbers and statistics pertaining to the drink theme. We have to trust Osborne, hoping that his account is reliable and has not been affected by the intake of alcohol, of which he boasts quite ostentatiously every now and again: "I realise that I have been drinking for hours and yet I have no memory of it. It is negative time" (18).

The search for Islamic booze havens begins in Beirut, where Osborne observes that Lebanon is "the only Arab country with a wine culture" (26), a surprising conclusion, for even an amateur wine consumer would probably wonder why he excludes places such as Tunisia. In Lebanon, Osborne meets the owner of the Coteaux de Botrys winery, discussing the political landscape and how it affects wines as such. Consequently, when told that the reason she sleeps with a gun is the goats that eat the grapes, his afterthought is that "one never knows who will come out of those beautiful hills. A wine critic or a man with a Kalashnikov" (28). Similarly in Egypt, the changing political climate overshadows Osborne's meeting

¹³ Rachel Cooke, "Lawrence Osborne: 'Acclaim. I don't notice it much.'" *The Guardian*, 13 April 2014.

with two Lebanese wine makers running “the only winery in Egypt that grows its own grapes in the country” (230). In fact, the whole chapter (“Twilight at The Windsor Hotel”) is devoted to politics and religion, and how the Egyptian Revolution has or will affect the drinking habits of the country not yet entirely dry. The ‘wet’ part in this case applies predominantly to beer, which, as Osborne observes, is “the national drink of Egypt” (235), the main reason being the fact that it has been drunk in Egypt since the ancient times and is considered “a kind of surrogate water” and thus “not ghettoized as alcohol” (237).

Another oasis in the supposedly dry places Osborne visits is Abu Dhabi, which, unlike Beirut, the “city of wine and sea,” offers the “desert and its faith” (48), though occasionally fortified with strong spirits that can be found in various bars, crowded by Arabs drinking vodka, or vodka-based drinks. It seems that finding such places during Osborne’s trip gives him a consolatory feeling that even in the Islamic world there are tokens which strike quite optimistic notes for the “great brotherhood of drinkers” (101). These tokens are best epitomized in his concluding remark concerning the product originating from the cold north, Sweden to be precise, and perfectly assimilated in the lands where alcohol is, officially at least, unwelcome: “Absolute is what you will dependably find in a bar in the Middle East” (104).

However, as promised in the title, there are some genuinely sobering up passages in Osborne’s book, a good example being Osborne’s trip to Oman with his Italian lover, all compiled in the chapter titled “New Year in Muscat,” whose core can be best summarized in the following conversation: “There’s only one thing I insist on at New Year’s and that’s a bottle of champagne. Is champagne legal in Oman?” ... “What if champagne is illegal?” “Then we’ll have a dry New Year’s” (85-86).

There are some other moments when Osborne, on the constant lookout for booze, has to surrender to the Islamic abstinence, as in Malaysia, where, having failed to find a place to purchase a drink, he retires to his hotel room for “a long night of orange juice and Malaysian Koranic TV” (166).

Most of the places on Osborne’s itinerary are a background to his own contemplations, which often become, much as is the case with some of his interlocutors, a “one-man monologue, fueled by alcohol” (63). These monologues, also internal, concern the nature of intoxication, as seen from the point of view of an experienced drinker, an outspoken one to be precise, a good example being Osborne’s conclusion on the final stages of drink addiction: “You miss a rung on the ladder and suddenly the ladder doesn’t exist” (143). Much as in this quoted fragment, Osborne’s language is often figurative, and the range of vocabulary is quite wide, for he employs literary as well as specialist lexis, but also decidedly colloquial items in the “alcho” (40) type.

All in all, Osborne’s travelogue is a smooth read, offering a closer look at what seems a fairly abstract concept of finding some points of convergence between “the wet” and “the dry.” Its main drawback is Osborne’s tendency to value his “wet” side of the story at the expense of its opposite. As a result, the book occasionally turns into a praise of drink, and a crusade against the heathen non-drinkers. So much so that when he quotes the alarming reports from *The Khaleej Times* about the number of Saudis hospitalized due to drinking eau de toilette as an alcoholic ersatz, the result being that in 2006 only “twenty citizens of the kingdom died after binging on perfume” (19), it seems that there is a touch of triumph here.

Still, even if the book is partly a journey of self-discovery, or rather self-confirmation, considering that Osborne has already discovered and become fully aware of his attachment to drink, it may be comforting to those who enjoy the occasional drink or two that “only when you are surrounded by teetotalers...you realize how indebted you are to the chemistries of alcohol” (10). All the rest, be it culture, history or politics is added value, which certainly makes Osborne’s book worth reading.

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Book Review: *Our Broad Present: Time and Contemporary Culture* by Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht

Reviewed work:

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Our Broad Present: Time and Contemporary Culture*. New York, Columbia UP, 2014. Originally published by Suhrkamp Verlag, 2011.

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's recent work involves rethinking the basic features of our contemporary historical consciousness to describe the contours of human temporal experience within a new configuration that he calls the Broad Present. This text contains six chapters that intersect serendipitously with each other and with issues in philosophy, technology, media and communication, sports and aesthetic experience, as well as pedagogy in the humanities. A full understanding does require basic digestion of a number of assumptions, themes, and the method of inquiry developed by Gumbrecht. In terms of large-scale historical change, he gratefully acknowledges and applies a method of historical inquiry from the German historian Reinhart Koselleck, author of "Future's Past" and other path-breaking works in historiography. He also acknowledges a debt to Foucault's approach to historical discontinuity. Gumbrecht thus eschews any teleological, dialectical, or narrative account of historical transformation in favor of a model based on unpredictable ruptures and shifts in the mood of a culture that the inhabitants quite suddenly, and unaware, find themselves unaccountably and inexplicably thrown into. At the ontological level, Gumbrecht's hermeneutic framework, derived from Heidegger, serves as his way of understanding how human beings dwell or exist in the Broad Present.

One of Gumbrecht's many strengths as a humanities scholar lies in the way he develops these methodological resources into elegant, underdetermined, nuanced, conceptual frameworks that allow for serious critical involvement with a writerly text whose pleasure unfolds in the reader's imagination.

For example, in a recent work on the topic of latency in culture¹⁴ he appropriates and revamps the Heidegger term *Stimmung*, a term that signifies a mood that we find ourselves in, that we do not become aware of until we are entangled in it. A mood like this can emerge within (or settle upon) an entire culture or a segment within it. Gumbrecht suggests that these moods come out of conditions of latency, a sense that something is there, but we know not what, or where, and certainly not why. The latency is generated by something unresolved, avoided, or too complex to understand. Whatever it is shows up as a mood that cannot be traced to its source. That is, the process that Gumbrecht describes is not Freudian. *Stimmungen* are not like symptoms that can be traced to their origins, which can then be worked through. Instead, we feel the latency as a feature of the ground of our being, and it colors our encounters with others, but we can never trace it to its source, or origin. The mood is also not Hegelian because it is not a necessary stage of the development of historical consciousness, pregnant with the next, and only fully comprehensible in light of the end of history. It comes and goes, unpredictably.

Gumbrecht implies that the production of latency is increasing as we find ourselves less capable today of finding any tangible, verifiable, evidence for our everyday experience of the physical world as described

¹⁴ *After 1945: Latency as the Origin of the Present*. Palo Alto, Stanford UP, 2013. Print.

by basic science textbooks. We are also often unable to demonstrate anything more than a contingent relationship between our beliefs and the world. This failure of evidence applies even to the relationship between our beliefs and our actions, a relationship in which the concepts we apply to our actions, such as freedom, cause, intention, and will, are themselves historically contingent beliefs.

In his Schulman Lecture, given at Yale, titled "All that Matters Is Invisible," Gumbrecht points out the flaw in asking for evidence, data, representations, and correspondences between mind and world, and between thought and action. The bedrock that modern physics has discovered is unstable and fundamentally meaningless within a framework of action and belief that corresponds to human being-in-the world. We can never come in actual contact with the tiny bits of matter that we are made of, and it is interesting that scientists and engineers can now create quantum computers but none of us can see our own cells divide as a sign that trying to "know" the world and "know" ourselves is forever impossible.

The second meaning of "all that matters is invisible" is a reminder that no matter how close we come to mapping the world epistemologically, that type of understanding does not matter much on the road to human fulfillment.

We take for granted a world we can never touch and a set of ultimate values and beliefs that we cannot confirm as true or real. Yet the latency produced by dwelling ambiguously between two layers, earth and sky, on nothing but a wing and a prayer, must be accumulating, as if waiting for the right configuration of circumstances to emerge.

Gumbrecht points out that Heidegger's notion of Dasein was an attempt to deal with the qualitative difference between the type of ontological structure in which humans exist and the type of physical structure in which quarks exist. From the perspective of Being and Time, the mind does not represent things in the world, or beliefs about things in the world, whether small or large, physical or spiritual, because the mind is not an entity that represents. Rather, the mind, consciousness, and its representations and cognitions, are, in some cases, necessary but not sufficient aspects of the organization of any given experience. It is the experience itself, in its totality, that replaces "subjectivity" in Heidegger's philosophy.

The type of tangible experience that would put us most immediately in touch with the reality of modern physics is mentioned by Gumbrecht in an example from Heidegger. To know the power and potential of modern physics is not to understand the mathematics of matter and motion, but instead to ride at supersonic speed in a fighter jet. Just as the automobile put us in touch with the power and limits of acceleration and motion as explained by Newtonian Physics, so the jet allows us to directly experience crossing the threshold of sound and experience the subatomic world through a technology that touches it in the most direct manner possible. It is one thing to see sound waves and wave functions defined in a textbook; yet another to break the sound barrier and feel the terrifying, fascinating, potential of the unseen world.

In addition to the concepts, *stimmung* and *latency*, Gumbrecht uses the word *chronotope*¹⁵ in a general manner to signify the social construction of temporality in a given epoch.

To gain a sense of the chronotope as a useful concept and to shed more light on the situation in the Broad Present, first consider the chronotope that governed the most recent era in western societies, the modernist historical consciousness of the 19th and early 20th centuries. In that chronotope, the past was understood as a chronological sequence of determined events, usually consisting of: problems and their solutions, errors and their consequences, and the lessons learned from them. The past was conceived of as gone forever, and although we could revisit it in memory, as a dimension of experience, pastness was impossible to experience directly; and why bother? This was the era of progress and creative destruction, after all. The future was seen as an open horizon of possibilities, inviting humans to launch all energy,

¹⁵ Gumbrecht does not employ the term chronotope in the same way as its originator, M. M. Bakhtin.

freedom, power, and knowledge forward into the river of time, helping to give content to its form and thereby shape its course. The present was the tiny space of agency between the closed, deterministic, past, and the free, open, future. Agency in this chronotope becomes any type of action or experience in which we learn from the past in order to exercise a more effective, more efficient, or more rational, form of agency, resulting in progress for the individual or the species.

This structure also contains a moral imperative, those who fail to learn, grow, develop, and make measurable progress, are guilty of squandering resources and opportunities that have been offered, perhaps entrusted, to them, so that they might advance themselves and the cause. The major systems of 19th century thought, although diverse on the surface, all contributed to creating and reproducing the modernist chronotope: Hegelianism, Darwinism, Social Darwinism, Marxism, Capitalism, the Bildungsroman, which reaches its apex during this period, and Existentialism in its atheistic and theistic versions, all relied on a closed past full of mistakes, a present space of agency, sometimes fully intentional, sometimes with randomness as a necessary feature, from which the lessons of the past are applied to the future, bringing about progress, which is confirmed by a retrospective look at the results.

Now we must picture, in contrast, human existence in the chronotope of the Broad Present. We are standing in the center of a receding horizon. It is so vast that we cannot fathom its boundaries, yet we know we are in it and we have access to large swaths of it through electronic technology. This is the Broad Present, an ever-expanding circle, containing all of the past, presenting itself as a collection of discrete, eternally-present possibilities with varying degrees of context and claims to authenticity. And, as an archive of all that ever happened, the Broad Present also contains within it the modernist historical consciousness, running, it seems on parallel tracks in opposite directions with divergent narratives of history. A variety of scenarios present themselves as equally real and available. Post-human speculations about immortality, apocalyptic scenarios, imaginary histories, and revisionary histories, are dispersed with equal specific gravity in an ocean of information. The center does not hold, and yet, there is no sense of loss. The past is too much a part of the centrifugal force of the ever-expanding present.

The future, on the other hand, is ambiguously present, but not as an open field of possibilities which the humanist subject actualizes. Rather, the future is increasingly experienced as a dim horizon closing in upon us, with the same rapidity as the expansion of the present. We don't have a clear idea of what will happen. There is a sense of constriction that does not feel right. Yet we cannot see the way forward. The *stimmung* that pervades our feel for the future is a correlate of angst or dread. The horizon has reversed, looming in upon us, and the problems we thought we might solve, or learn from, are now revealed as more complicated than we bargained for; and still, we must go on.

Our attitude toward the future, with its uncertainty, risk, and wildly varying scenarios about how it all ends, creates a culture of survival, a culture where coping, recovery, and resiliency have become an important part of everyday conversation. As we face climate change, the trauma of war, episodic eruptions of terrorist violence, persistent racism and xenophobia, recurrent crises in the international monetary system, we realize, in angst, that a host of problems we ought to have left dead in the past remain alive and come at us from the future. In this chronotope, human agency is constrained and enabled by practices of risk management and damage control. Whether making decisions about our health, reputation, or finances, the future is defined as much by attempts to prevent or avoid the bad as it is to attain the good, to paraphrase one central idea in Ulrich Beck's *Risikogesellschaft*.¹⁶

Consider that today's most optimistically voiced and scientifically argued utopian scenarios are viewed by many as dystopias. The reason for this is very simple. Myths or religious beliefs about the future are far more believable than scientific predictions, because mythical or religious beliefs are accepted as part of a

¹⁶Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: SAGE, 1992. Print

worldview, which contains an eschatology, and a chronotope of its own. However, once we find ourselves outside of that mythic framework, yet still trying to prove and predict the future, all science is equivocal.

For example, scientist, author, and Google executive Raymond Kurzweil has been taken seriously by some when he claims that the interconnectedness of various forms of information technology, biotechnology, nature, and humanity will integrate, learn, become conscious, and form a singularity. The optimists believe that the singularity will be intelligent in ways we are too dumb to imagine and will perceive things in ways we cannot visualize. Whether our own lives will have some continuity, or we will be submerged in the singularity, is an open question. After all, the singularity is not Heaven, it is a hypothesis about how the physical world will be organized in the near future. This provides no certainty, but instead, looms as an ambiguous and unsatisfying account of how the future shapes, or perhaps devours, us.

We are here, now what do we do? Gumbrecht identifies an affinity between the chronotype of the Broad Present and an approach to existing, knowing, and creating that he calls *The Prose of the World*. This is a phrase from Hegel, who stated that certain forms of consciousness, which he associated with the writing of Diderot, frustrated and fascinated him because he could not synthesize them or fit them into his narrative of historical progress. The *Prose of the World* suggests a form of perspectivism in which historical events, works of art, and human beings are studied and evaluated because they are intrinsically interesting, not because they are world historical individuals who fulfill a role in the march toward the absolute. The *Prose of the World* approach places a heavy demand on our ability to carefully observe, analyze, and synthesize information in service of our life plans. However, rather than trying to verify whether one's beliefs and actions are correct, measurable, and fit into a plan, we ought to spend our time retrieving, refashioning, and reimagining the resources in the Broad Present.

For example, people who devote two months out of the year to re-enacting Medieval lifestyles certainly do not believe they have travelled back in time and have thereby "really" become Medieval. They may simply believe that investing themselves in enacting a version of a life that intrigues them is a more valid way to create the present in the face of an uncertain future rather than drifting along through life aimlessly, yet on schedule.

How can scholars in the Humanities contribute to the *Prose of the World*? Gumbrecht recommends a way of approaching material that is better suited to our age and to the continued relevance of the humanities. This pedagogy is defined in terms of: Contemplation, Riskful Thinking, and Imagination. Gumbrecht encourages us to deliberately slow down, to revisit texts that we think we understand, to compare, to synthesize, to assemble a deeper understanding of a fewer number of things, rather than, for example, serve as information providers in the new digital humanities industry.¹⁷

Contemplation allows perspectives to emerge and give rise to fruitful associations over time. Contemplation should also include tangible presence. One can publish an article about the Mona Lisa without ever seeing it and then go stand in line, perhaps with aching feet, and contemplate its presence. The lasting memory will be of the contemplation of its presence, not facts assembled in the article. Scholars and thinkers should therefore describe as well as inhabit modes of engagement that are tangible, like experiencing the presence of sunlight touching the body, or being-in-the-sun, as opposed to consuming pills as a means to absorb vitamin D.

Riskful Thinking is best exemplified in Gumbrecht's own conflicted relationship with the work of Heidegger, whose politics and anti-semitism Gumbrecht repeatedly points out and condemns, but whose philosophy, for many, provides the most relevant way of understanding the world we inhabit and the dangers that remain concealed within it. More generally, Riskful Thinking involves practicing techniques

¹⁷ The example is the Reviewer's.

such as close reading, deconstruction, counterfactual analysis, and random utopian speculations, that introduce nuance and complexity into our understanding and provide signposts and faint paths between the layers of information that the world consists of. This is also another way to short circuit our tendency to serve as conduits for information.

Imagination refers to developing the ability to fashion memories, impressions, sounds, and smells, into snapshots of time and place. History is here, now, and the future provides no way to make sense of it, so it is up to the scholarly imagination to enrich, enliven, transform, and embody the past. Gumbrecht performs this task beautifully through his life and work.

The *Prose of the World* approach does shift the emphasis in both learning and living toward sifting creatively through information and creating coherence in experience. And yet, the deeper point is really not that “information overload” is overwhelming us. Humans always find ways to reduce, synthesize, and pay attention to things that matter in a complex environment. The stimuli available to a Neanderthal are enough to cause bewilderment if not blocked, shaped, channeled, and framed in a way that allows him to survive. The process of selection, canonization, and valorization will still apply to what a culture remembers and attends to in the Broad Present. We will not simply be flooded with information.¹⁸

Information selection and retrieval will also be structured by Bourdieusian “fields” of interest and taste. These fields will continue to overlap, reinforce each other, and shed light on aspects of the Broad Present that are significant. Conversely, what is forgotten or cast into oblivion will not really be present, even if stored forever.

The deeper problem has to do with a diminished space for experiences of presence and the expansion of a space of deferral. This, although humans have also always dwelled within technologically-mediated environments, the type of hyper-mediated environment that we now inhabit, which produces a way of relating to the other in a mode of deferral of presence because the totality of our experience cannot be made present.

The first reason for this is that sufficiently large dimension of our experience, especially in information-rich, hyper-mediated environments, bears the trace of its own status as a representation which is present in that moment as something potentially present forever. Whether this be a kind of action, like an instructional video, or a digital image of a location, “the Taj Mahal,” or an idea; it appears to us as doubled, containing an eternal copy of itself within our experience of it; one part here now, one part there forever. Moreover, dwelling in an environment whose temporal structure is radically asynchronous, characterized by rapid shifts in content and context, constant interruptions, and the lure of escape and distraction, must produce the dim perception that major aspects of one’s experience feel as if they are not really happening, and probably never will, but are still somehow present, contributing to the experience.

This aspect, the interweaving of digital and physical structures of time, space, and interaction in our experience, the infusion or even conquest of memory over present experience and the complexity of temporal experience is only part of the issue, and has been addressed in its fully reflexive form by modernist authors such as Proust:

No sooner had the warm liquid, and the crumbs with it, touched my palate than a shudder ran through my whole body, and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary changes that were taking place. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, but individual, detached, with no suggestion of its origin. And at once the vicissitudes of life had become indifferent to me, its disasters innocuous, its brevity illusory—this new sensation having had on me the effect which love has of filling me with a precious essence; or rather this essence was not in me, it was myself ... Whence could it have come to me, this all-powerful joy? I was

¹⁸<http://www.npr.org/2016/12/07/504706640/information-overload-not-everybody-is-feeling-it-pew-study-says>

conscious that it was connected with the taste of tea and cake, but that it infinitely transcended those savors, could not, indeed, be of the same nature as theirs. Whence did it come? What did it signify? How could I seize upon and define it? ... what an abyss of uncertainty whenever the mind feels it has strayed beyond its own borders; when it, the seeker, is at once the dark region through which we must go seeking, where all its equipment will avail to nothing. Seek? More than that: create. It is face to face with something which does not so far exist, to which it alone can give reality and substance, which it alone can bring to the light of day. (34-35)

In light of passages like this, living in the Broad Present can be understood as a rarefied version of the typical Proustian experience of time, memory, and existence.

Yet the most intractable part of the problem of losing touch with presence is that we are not electronic-brainish enough to sustain it for long. We now face a situation in which the form of a great number of technologically mediated experiences available to us requires a qualitative transformation in the way that we inhabit a nexus of interaction whose evolution we have amplified to the point where technologies are so intelligent and efficient that they gather our world together into totalities we cannot experience directly. These smart technologies contribute to the ambiguity and lack of fit by misidentifying our tastes, habits, and preferences, through algorithms that work without the context sensitivity of humans, such as those which compile lists of things we ought to like, listen to, or watch, which often contain hilarious anomalies.

The space of deferral will expand, it seems, because the evolution of perception and consciousness runs behind the evolution of the conditions of experience, making “online presence” impossible at this point.

The form of life in which “we” dwell in the future will have to be based upon a symbiosis of biology and technology, given our experience features of connectivity and plasticity that reveal the world that we currently touch indirectly and, in a jerky, stilted, manner more readily accessible. The kind of beings we have become may allow for dwelling in meaningful presence in ways that we cannot conceive of. And yet, once we have become those beings, new gaps and fissures will emerge.

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